THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: November 17, 2010 REPORT NO:

ATTENTION: Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee

SUBJECT: Engine Company Brownout and Lifeguard Reductions Monthly Report

REFERENCE: None

REQUESTED ACTION

This is an informational item only. No action is required by the Committee or the City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Accept the Report.

INTRODUCTION

This is the ninth monthly report to the PS&NS Committee on the status of the Engine Company Brownouts and Lifeguard reductions being administered to achieve budgetary savings in the Fire-Rescue Department. Brownouts are defined as the temporary closures of up to eight fire engines per day in those fire stations housing more than one emergency response apparatus.

This month's report will update workload, brownout frequency, and response time statistics since the inception of the Brownout Plan on February 6, 2010 through October 31, 2010. It will also address an increase in overdue fire company inspections and reduction in training opportunities since the plan began. Impacts to Lifeguard operations resulting from staffing reductions will also be discussed.

SUMMARY

During this reporting period (February 6 to October 31, 2010), the thirteen engines subject to brownout were out-of-service from 31% to 100% of the time. As a result, compliance with the 5 minute 90% of the time national response standard for the first due unit has declined to 23% to 81% within these districts and 54% city-wide as compared to 27% to 87% in these districts and 55% city-wide for the same period last year. Average response times increased by 15 seconds within these districts and by 6 seconds city-wide when compared to the same period last year.

Response times for the assembly of an Effective Fire Force of 14-15 firefighters (3 engines, 1 truck and 1 battalion chief) within the 9 minutes 90% of the time national response standard was 0% to 100% within these districts and 72% city-wide as compared to 38% to 100% respectively and 70% city-wide for the

same period last year. Average response times for an Effective Fire Force decreased slightly (less than one minute) within these districts and city-wide when compared to the same period last year.

STATISTICAL DATA

Following is cumulative statistical data for the emergency response districts subject to fire engine brownouts and the response time impacts city-wide for the period indicated.

Brownout Frequency

Data in the table below reflects the percentage of total operational hours in the reporting period (days in period x 24 hours) that the indicated engine company was out of service due to placement in brownout status.

Percent of Time Units Browned Out
02/06/2010 – 10/31/2010

Community	Engine	Pct.
College	E10	98.36%
Downtown	E201	52.49%
East Village	E4	30.91%
Golden Hills	E11	45.18%
Kearny Mesa	E28	39.80%
Lincoln Park	E12	36.22%
Midway	E20	48.87%
Mira Mesa	E44	89.80%
North Park	E14	49.20%
Pacific Beach	E21	52.19%
Rancho Penasquitos	E40	90.10%
San Ysidro	E29	49.56%
University City	E35	42.85%

Number of Emergency Responses

Data in the table below reflects the total number and type of emergency incidents that occurred within the City during the reporting period.

Overall System Wide
02/06 – 10/31

	Fire	Medical	Other	Total
2009	2,667	71,114	9,835	83,616
2010	2,592	73,691	9,133	85,416
Percent Change	-2.81	3.62	-7.14	2.15

City-wide Response Time Performance

This following data reflects City-wide response time performance expressed in two formats. The first table shows the percentage of incidents where no more than 5 minutes elapsed from the time an engine or truck company was notified of an emergency response and their arrival at the scene of the emergency. The nationally accepted standard is 90% and the Department's current performance target is 55%. The second table uses the same notification and arrival time stamps, but reports response times as an average (mean).

5 Minutes or Less Response Time Percentage (1st Arriving Engine or Truck)

2009 Pct	2010 Pct	Percent Change
55.47%	53.82%	-2.99

Average Response Time (1st Arriving Engine or Truck)

2009 Avg	2010 Avg	Percent Change
0:05:02	0:05:08	1.79

Data Reported by Brownout Community

The data in the following tables uses the same criteria as described above, but breaks the data down by individual community.

Browned Out Districts
Incident Counts
02/06 – 10/31

	2009			2010			Percent Change		
	Fire	Medical	Other	Fire	Medical	Other	Fire	Medical	Other
College (Sta. 10)	67	1,862	213	53	1,997	206	-20.90	7.25	-3.29
Downtown (Sta. 201)	44	1,611	296	51	1,627	285	15.91	0.99	-3.72
East Village (Sta. 4)	56	2,949	382	69	3,262	316	23.21	10.61	-17.28
Golden Hills (Sta. 11)	70	1,513	161	71	1,548	125	1.43	2.31	-22.36
Kearny Mesa (Sta. 28)	86	1,778	473	93	1,855	405	8.14	4.33	-14.38
Lincoln Park (Sta. 12)	142	3,430	281	131	3,357	215	-7.75	-2.13	-23.49
Midway (Sta. 20)	55	2,289	295	67	2,457	267	21.82	7.34	-9.49
Mira Mesa (Sta. 44)	56	1,178	228	44	1,090	197	-21.43	-7.47	-13.60
North Park (Sta. 14)	90	2,129	203	81	2,256	191	-10.00	5.97	-5.91
Pacific Beach (Sta. 21)	65	2,368	306	66	2,481	313	1.54	4.77	2.29
Rancho Penasquitos (Sta. 40)	36	920	135	31	901	126	-13.89	-2.07	-6.67
San Ysidro (Sta. 29)	43	2,484	132	67	2,712	107	55.81	9.18	-18.94
University City (Sta. 35)	125	2,168	662	104	2,301	676	-16.80	6.13	2.11

Minutes or Less Response Time Percentage (First Arriving Engine or Truck)	2009 Pct	2010 Pct	Pct Change
College (Sta. 10)	53.94%	45.43%	-15.77
Downtown (Sta. 201)	80.94%	80.52%	-0.52
East Village (Sta. 4)	86.80%	80.01%	-7.82
Golden Hills (Sta. 11)	74.06%	67.04%	-9.49
Kearny Mesa (Sta. 28)	38.51%	36.03%	-6.44
Lincoln Park (Sta. 12)	49.81%	46.25%	-7.13
Midway (Sta. 20)	52.22%	49.95%	-4.34
Mira Mesa (Sta. 44)	40.97%	33.36%	-18.57
North Park (Sta. 14)	76.11%	68.01%	-10.65
Pacific Beach (Sta. 21)	60.60%	49.45%	-18.40
Rancho Penasquitos (Sta. 40)	27.12%	23.22%	-14.37
San Ysidro (Sta. 29)	60.01%	56.60%	-5.68
University City (Sta. 35)	33.58%	28.20%	-16.03

Average Response Time (First Arriving Engine or Truck)	2009 Avg	2010 Avg	Pct Change
College (Sta. 10)	0:05:02	0:05:19	5.76
Downtown (Sta. 201)	0:03:48	0:03:49	0.32
East Village (Sta. 4)	0:03:47	0:04:03	7.10
Golden Hills (Sta. 11)	0:04:13	0:04:32	7.48
Kearny Mesa (Sta. 28)	0:05:42	0:05:53	3.02
Lincoln Park (Sta. 12)	0:05:10	0:05:20	3.39
Midway (Sta. 20)	0:05:08	0:05:19	3.52
Mira Mesa (Sta. 44)	0:05:47	0:06:07	6.03
North Park (Sta. 14)	0:04:07	0:04:30	9.44
Pacific Beach (Sta. 21)	0:04:41	0:05:12	11.04
Rancho Penasquitos (Sta. 40)	0:06:15	0:06:42	7.22
San Ysidro (Sta. 29)	0:04:58	0:05:10	4.16
University City (Sta. 35)	0:06:13	0:06:31	4.63

Effective Fire Force

This following data reflects response time performance for the assembly of the 14-15 firefighters needed to complete the tasks necessary to combat a typical residential structure fire. In our City, this is achieved by the response of 3 engines, 1 truck, and 1 battalion chief. The table shows both City-wide and brownout district performance. The nationally accepted standard is 90% and the Department's current performance target is 72%.

Effective Fire Force*
02/06 – 10/31

		2009	2009	2009	2010	2010	2010
Community	**Engine**	**Percent 9 Min**	**Average (Minutes)**	**Count**	**Percent 9 Min**	**Average (Minutes)**	**Count**
College	10	86.67%	8.00	15	66.67%	8.08	12
Downtown	201	92.86%	8.38	14	92.31%	5.28	13
East Village	04	100.00%	4.48	25	81.82%	5.46	22
Golden Hills	11	100.00%	5.63	15	100.00%	6.28	21
Kearny Mesa	28	40.00%	9.24	5	77.78%	8.01	18
Lincoln Park	12	80.95%	7.28	21	76.00%	7.72	25
Midway	20	57.14%	8.57	7	81.82%	7.81	11
Mira Mesa	44	50.00%	8.70	6	0.00%	11.22	8
North Park	14	100.00%	6.23	19	100.00%	6.29	19
Pacific Beach	21	54.55%	8.76	11	62.50%	8.95	8
RanchoPenasquitos	40	66.67%	8.89	3	0.00%	11.38	5
San Ysidro	29	60.00%	9.24	5	83.33%	7.67	6
University City	35	38.46%	10.14	26	54.17%	9.08	24
City Wide		69.91%	7.89	462	72.09%	7.69	455

* 26 incidents originally dispatched as single engine responses and later upgraded were not included in this EFF calculation

SERVICE DELIVERY IMPACTS

There is ample scientific data to support that the more quickly the right type and number of resources can be brought to bear on an emergency incident, generally speaking, the better the outcome. Under the best of circumstances, multiple concurrent calls for service, routine maintenance, training, community educational outreach events, administrative activities, and unit location at the time of an incident dispatch can all impact incident response times.

Because many variables can influence incident outcomes, it is very difficult to isolate changes in incident outcomes resulting solely from brownouts. However, it can be safely assumed that any emergency receiving a delayed response for any reason will result in undesired impacts. In the case of fires, the most likely impact is increased fire spread and damage and the increased possibility of injury or death. In the case of a medical emergency, the impact may be prolonged pain from an injury, distress from a medical condition, or greater risk of permanent injury or death.

Service delivery impacts are felt by all requestors for emergency response whenever a response is delayed due to brownouts or other reasons. However, accurately isolating the specific impacts of the brownouts on victim survival probability proves to be extremely difficult and it is important to note that over the past five years an average of four persons per year have died as a result of fires in our City.

Non-emergency impacts include a noticeable increase in the number of fire inspections performed by our engine and truck companies that are late in being completed and increased difficulty in conducting manipulative training due to the number of units committed to incidents or out-of-service status.

To address the late inspections impacts, light duty personnel have been assigned to assist in completing these assignments when they are available. In April of this year, 12% of the inspections performed by companies were more than 90 days overdue. Currently, 27% are overdue, an increase from 20% at the last report. These overdue inspections increase risk associated with not identifying and correcting fire code violations and slow the collection of inspection fee revenues.

To address the challenges in freeing units from emergency response status to conduct required training, the number of units permitted to be temporarily out-of-service at one time was increased from 12 to 14. In addition, the number of units removed from service to attend manipulative training sessions for 4 hours in the morning and afternoon at the Regional Public Safety Training Institute has been reduced from 5 (or 4) to 3 (or 2) units. When possible, these training sessions have been reduced by sending an instructor to the fire station or delivering the training in an online format to increase unit availability.

Significant Emergency Response Impacts during this Reporting Period

On October 22, 2010, at 1538 hours a residential structure fire was reported at 6632 Tiffen Avenue, in the community of North Encanto. The fire originated in the kitchen, and before it was extinguished had penetrated the attic of the dwelling, causing approximately $75,000 in damage. There were no injuries. The fire was the result of food unattended on a stove.

Response Time Analysis

Engine 26 was the closest available resource and arrived in 7 minutes, 24 seconds; 2 minutes 24 seconds longer than our goal of 5 minutes. An Effective Fire Force was assembled at this incident in 10 minutes, 16 seconds; 1 minute 16 seconds longer than our goal of 9 minutes.

Engine Availability Analysis

Engine 12, the first due engine for this address, was browned out, and was not available for this response. Engine 10 was also browned out, and would have been the third due engine.

Conclusions

Engine 12 was browned out, and not available for this response. The third due engine, Engine 10, was also browned out and unavailable. Heartland Engine 10 was added through our CAD to CAD arrangement with the Central Zone. San Diego Engines 17 and 7 were also added, and responded from a distance. Had Engine 12 been available, it would have halted the fire's progression earlier and reduced the amount of damage that occurred.

LIFEGUARD DIVISION

The Lifeguard Division contributed to budgetary savings via a number of reductions. Impacts from reductions taken have been felt in several areas of lifeguard operations: lifeguard coverage, training activities, increased workloads for supervisors, personnel schedules and Reductions in Force (RIF). These impacts are discussed below.

Budget Reduction Impacts on Lifeguard Training

To achieve budgetary savings for Fiscal Years 2010-2011, dedicated training on Wednesdays was eliminated and employee schedules were altered to create additional relief shifts. These relief shifts allow the Lifeguard Division to cover open operational shifts on straight time rather than with overtime. Additionally, the River Rescue Team had its annual training reduced by half. Both of these changes resulted in a reduction in the overtime budget. The Lifeguard Division also eliminated one Lifeguard II position dedicated to developing, organizing, and conducting training. Budgetary savings achieved by these reductions are $236,000 in overtime and $68,912 for the LGII FTE.

While these reductions have decreased training opportunities overall, and are a negative impact, minimal critical training required for employees to maintain essential skills is being attempted through in-service training, as well as a series of modules offered at the start of employee shifts. A training plan has been developed and was implemented beginning October 2, 2010. This plan will continue to be evaluated and revised throughout the winter months.

Update on Torrey Pines Incidents

The department continues to pursue an agreement with the University of California, San Diego in regard to lifeguard coverage in the Torrey Pines area.

The following incidents have been recorded for Torrey Pines City Beach:

2010 Torrey Pines City Beach Responses 10/07/2010 to 10/31/2010	**Total**
Medical Aids (via 911 or Call Box)	3
Water Rescues	0
Cliff Rescues/Recoveries	0
Preventative Actions (cliff & water warnings/non-rescue calls)	11
Enforcement	2
Other Calls for Service	2
Total Incidents	18

The following incidents have been recorded for the non-City sections of Torrey Pines Beach:

2010 Torrey Pines Beach Response (non-City sections) 10/07/2010 to 10/31/2010	**Total**
Medical Aids (via 911 or Call Box)	1
Water Rescues	0
Cliff Rescues/Recoveries	0
Preventative Actions (cliff & water warnings/non-rescue calls)	10
Enforcement	0
Other Calls for Service	0
Total Incidents	11

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS
The brownouts are projected to achieve an FY2011 budgetary savings of $11.5M.

The Lifeguard Division reductions to overtime, Torrey Pines operations, Wind 'n' Sea operations and operational relief hours are projected to achieve an FY2011 budgetary savings of $721,915.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTIONS
N/A

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS
Ongoing

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS
Community and Citizens

Javier Mainar, Fire Chief